



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

MR. CARL LUMHOLTZ IN NORTHERN MEXICO.

The following letter was received August 22:

SQUIRIRI, 16 July, 1893.

DEAR MR. H.:—

I hope you have, this year, received two letters from me, the last one of 29 May. I followed the Rio Fuerte down from Morelos to San Ignacio, making investigations among the very few surviving Tubares. I succeeded in getting a rather complete vocabulary of their language, including pronomina, verbs and phrases.

They bury their dead differently from their neighbors, the Tarahumares and Tepehuanes, in underground vaults or cavities. A few individuals, both male and female, were photographed and anthropometric measurements taken.

Nearly the whole Tarahumar land is drained by Rio Fuerte and its numerous tributaries, so, after having passed the pueblo Tubares, this river carries a great body of water. It is in the numerous *barrancas* watered by Fuerte and its branches that the gentile (pagan) Tarahumares live. In the dry season, from April to June, the gentiles make long excursions down the river to catch fish. The size of the river does not here allow any more of their usual method of fishing, by poisoning the water. They make a kind of fishing net by fastening together a dozen or more of their blankets, and on my travels down the river I saw some of my gentile friends catching in one hour quite a cartload of fish, mostly "suckers."

My road brought me over Rodeo once more to Batopilas where I, after over a year's absence from civilization, truly enjoyed four days civilized life in the hospitable house of Mr. A. R. Shepherd, director of the hacienda. The heat in Batopilas, as situated in a barranca, is very great, and the thermometer, every day of my stay here (first half of June), showed over 100° Fahr. in the shade, up to 106°.

From Batopilas I again ascended over 4,000 feet to the table land, travelling in a southerly direction for three days to Sta. Anita, where I remained over a fortnight. Nearly starved out from its dry, hot barrancas, I made my way to Gueguachic, from where I now am on my way back to Chihuahua and then to Chicago.

It will be refreshing both for soul and body to reach civilization again. I seldom get an opportunity to read as I don't get time to look at the few books I have. On account of my wandering life, mail but rarely reaches me. I am very fond of natives and of Mexicans, too, for all that, but, having this kind of people as sole companions for month after month, you long at last for something better.

Provisions are very scarce in the Sierra and, unless a man can live like the Indians themselves, he should not attempt to travel among them. I shall not trouble you by telling you how I fare; enough be it to say that, although I at present find myself among the most well-to-do Indians, it is extremely difficult to buy an *almud de maiz* (just enough for four men for one day.)

The gentiles have at present absolutely nothing to offer you but mezcal—the heart of the maguey toasted. Nevertheless, my health is good and I hope to return here in November to continue my journey into Guatemala, following the crest of the Sierra and making such investigations among the Indians as a year's time will allow me.

As the cave-dweller question now for over a year has occupied my attention very much, it may be appropriate to supplement what I before have stated on this subject. The Tarahumares are very fond of living in caves, but in most cases temporarily. Permanent cave-dwellers are not numerous, either among the so-called Christians or the gentiles. The Tarahumares generally plant corn on more than one place and have to move in order to save and to harvest, and also on account of their domestic animals for which they have to provide pasture according to the season. For this and other reasons a Tarahumar may change abode six times a year or more. In accordance with early training of the missionaries and constant admonitions of their present authorities, the Christian Tarahumares, as a rule, move in to the pueblos in the winter, but many, also, remain on their ranches or settle down in some cave. The gentiles have ranches on the mountain sides or on the tops of the barrancas (*cumbres*) but down in the barrancas they also plant corn at a later season, when the rains commence in June and July.

After having thus harvested his corn in the high localities, the gentile Tarahumar goes down to harvest in the barranca, where he almost invariably lives in caves. In May and June, when whatever little maize and beans he may have raised are gone, he wanders in the barrancas looking for fish and pitayas; and he may sleep in a cave or under a tree or wherever he finds it most convenient.

I have seen gentile Tarahumares have their caves close by, some 500 or 1,000 yards lower down towards the bottom of the valley. Here they like to live in the rainy months and in the winter; for the Tarahumar house, if he has one, is a miserable shed, covered with straw or the like. It is also a peculiar fact that, whether Christian or gentile, he does not sleep in his house. Husband and wife go at night to sleep under a tree, in a cave, or near the storehouse for maize, leaving the *to-cois* (boys) and *te-we-kes* (girls) to take care of the house.

Rarely do they make improvements in the caves, beyond building small peculiar round houses of stone and mud, as storerooms. They also make storerooms in remote caves. Other improvements in the caves are walls that do not reach to the top of the cave, mere partitions of stone and mud, or stone only; but they are rudely made and bear no comparison to what I have seen in the caves of the south-west of the United States.

The Tarahumares, moreover, do not live together in numbers; each family has its cave, and the caves are generally far apart. The pottery made by these people is rude and without decoration; but they show a marvellously developed artistic

sense in designing patterns for their girdles and blankets, which display very great variety and pretty combinations.

As already said, the Pimas to the north and the Tepehuanes to the south, the former particularly, share the Tarahumar predilection for caves.

These three tribes greatly resemble each other in appearance and mode of life, and yet with marked differences in some respects. The Tarahumares, for instance, take no account of puberty but marry a girl at any age, while it is considered among the Tepehuanes that a girl, who omits during the first three months a solemn purification, will bring disaster upon herself and upon others, almost as if the world were coming to an end.

Of the three tribes the Tarahumares being, to say the least, one of the most primitive races on the continent and among those least affected by civilization, remain much the most interesting. They are, also, strong in number. Without having had access to the official reports of the census, naturally not very exact with regard to Indians, I should estimate them at about 35,000, of whom 3,500 or 4,000 are gentiles. A Mexican gentleman, who has held the position of *Jefe político* and who takes a greater interest than any one else in these Indians, estimates their number at 100,000, about equally divided between Christians and gentiles. He, however, has not travelled among these people, and, while I claim for my own figures no more than an approximate value, I am convinced that his are absolutely wrong.

Yours very sincerely,

CARL LUMHOLTZ.